

July 28, 2009

To: Federal Program Coordinators, Principals, Superintendents

From: Douglas Price
Director of Title I School Improvement
Arizona Department of Education

RE: Title I LEA Improvement and School Improvement Grant Update

Please note the memo from Dr. Richard M. Long, Executive Director of the National Association of State Title I Directors (NASTID), that was sent to Nancy Konitzer after NASTID met with the USDOE representatives last week regarding Title I LEA and School Improvement and ARRA funding at the end of this grant update correspondence. **The intent of this update is to inform Title I Schools in Improvement of the current issues regarding Title I LEA and School Improvement grants.** The content of the Long memo laid the foundation for our current grant status.

Last year, the ADE TISI Unit funded the following grants:

Funding source 1003 (a):

- Title I School Improvement - Warning Year
- Title I School Improvement - Year One
- Title I School Improvement - Year Two
- Title I LEA Improvement - Year One
- Title I LEA Improvement - Year Two
- Title I LEA Improvement - Corrective Action

Funding source: 1003(g):

- Title I School Improvement Corrective Action
- Title I School Improvement Restructure Planning
- Title I School Improvement Restructure Implementation

Because the feds are withholding the 1003(g) funds (notifying states of this action late last week) until December or January (and placing more restrictions and prescriptions within the use of those funds – combining 1003(g) funds with ARRA

funds), we have had to make some adjustments regarding our LEA and School Improvement grants. ADE's Title I LEA and School Improvement Unit will be funding the following grants this school year using 1003(a) school improvement funds:

- Title I School Improvement – Year One
- Title I School Improvement – Year Two
- Title I LEA Improvement – Year One
- Title I LEA Improvement – Year Two
- Title I LEA Improvement – Corrective Action

The Title I 1003(a) LEA and School Improvement grants (listed immediately above) will go on-line in early August, and we will send out a grant alert to schools when the grants become active on the Common Logon. Title I LEA and School Improvement has not received a final determination from the Central Processing Unit as to our total LEA/School Improvement grant allotment for 1003(a) funds but have been told that we will know sometime this week. We are hopeful that we have full funding and will increase the 1003(a) grant allotments from last year. Once we have the 1003(a) actual grant allotment totals, we will send notice to schools about the grant amounts and the opening application dates. In these grants we will be looking for significant Response to Intervention documentation/implementation. We will discuss this at the regional Fall Process workshops (See Calendar of Events – August 12, 17, 18, and 19).

We do not know all of the Regulatory Guidance from the feds for the 1003(g) funds and/or the ARRA funds, but some of the fed's thinking is spelled out in Long's memo below. **It is our intent in funding the Corrective Action, Restructure Planning and Restructure Implementation schools in improvement using the 1003(g) funds, but as I have stated before, we have to await the regulations and then the release of those funds to see if and how we can use the school improvement grants for corrective action, restructure planning and restructure implementation schools.** As a Unit, once we have the regulatory guidance, we will be meeting with CA, RP and RI schools to see how the new regulations will be affecting them regarding these school improvement grants. *The essence of the new regulations appears to support funding for exponential change in schools in CA and above rather than funding for merely incremental changes in the schools that have consistently missed AYP.*

Title I School Improvement will not be offering a Warning Year Grant this year.

Please note the following grant application deadline (I have attached the Power Point for reference):

**REMINDER: FY2010 ARRA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT GRANT – APPLICATION DEADLINE – JULY
31, 2009**

This grant deadline has been extended to July 31 so the application deadline listed in the power point is inaccurate. If you have questions, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your time and attention in this matter.

Abbreviated summary of notes from Dr. Long to Nancy Konitzer regarding the 1003g issue:

- As you know, the regular 1003(g) funds were not sent from the US government to the states to distribute as part of the school improvement process.
- The regular 1003(g) funds are being combined with the ARRA funds.
- The process for sending out the ARRA funds and then using them (with the regular funds) will be the subject of process that requires a comment and review process 30-day rule-making process).
- The timeline of the process will result in the funds not being available until December 2009 or January 2010.
- It was anticipated that the school improvement announcement was to be made in conjunction with the Race to the Top announcement on July 24th.
- The announcement was put on hold as one of the uses of funds is under review.

- On July 20th a delegation from NASTID met with the representatives of the US Department of Education, including the Secretary's office.
- At that time we were told that the reason that the regular 1003(g) funds were not being sent (as anticipated in July) was that the Secretary is seeking to combine the funds to have greater impact, and
- That the Secretary has a different sense of how to do school improvement. They are going to use four models of change: turnaround, CMO, closing schools, and transforming schools.
- It is my understanding that the point on transforming schools is the one under review right now.
- The Department is saying that states will have more flexibility as a result of this process, and that there is going to be some changes in the timelines announced.

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